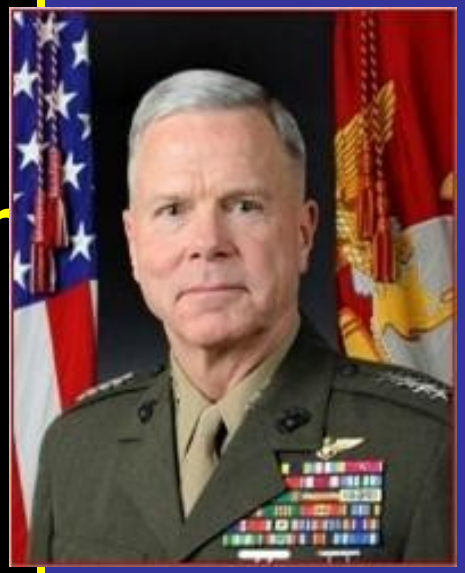
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=1pD7RI_p1ns

Marines and Ethical Behavior

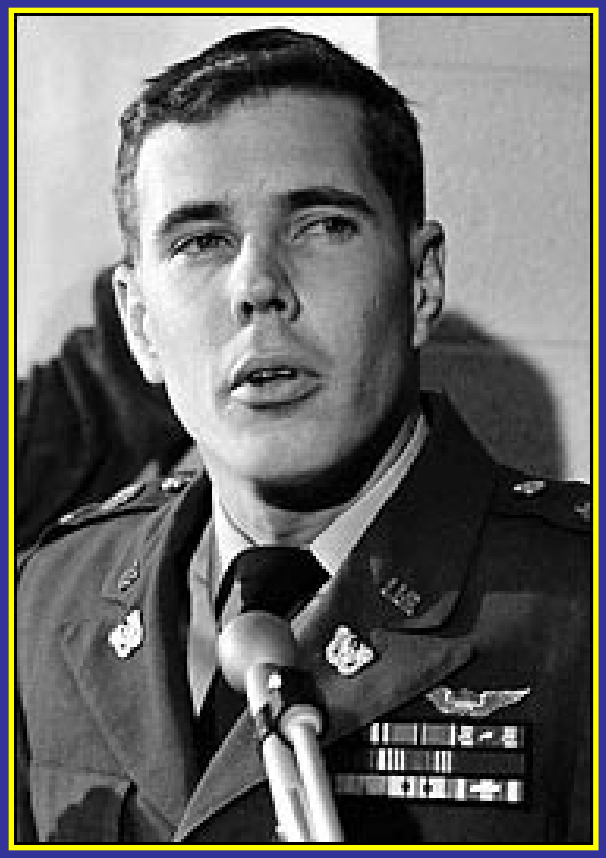
CMC & SGTMAJ Video

Whether fighting at sea or ashore, Marines have been guided by honor, courage and commitment. These core values have been the compass for every Marine's service throughout our rich history. Superior leadership, hard training, and a willingness to sacrifice have forged our Corps into one of the most capable fighting forces the world has ever known. Our Marine Corps has remained true to these values for 235 years … and so it will during my service as your Commandant.

General James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps



Gen. Amos



Dedicated to the Memory of CWO Hugh Thompson 1943 – 2006

- **Demonstrate to the world there is “No Better Friend. No Worse Enemy” than a U.S. Marine.**

- **You are part of the most feared and trusted force. Engage your brain before you engage your weapon.**

Gen. Mattis

Ethics

- Honor, courage and commitment

Ethics: eth·ics plural noun

1. (used with a singular or plural verb) a system of moral principles: the ethics of a culture.
2. the rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions or a particular group, culture, etc.: medical ethics; Christian ethics.
3. moral principles, as of an individual: His ethics forbade betrayal of a confidence.
4. (usually used with a singular verb) that branch of philosophy dealing with values relating to human conduct, with respect to the rightness and wrongness of certain actions and to the goodness and badness of the

Leading Marines

- Being a Marine is a state of mind.
- Ethical behavior is action taken specifically in observance of a defined standard of conduct.
- For Marines, ethics are the standards of our corps. As a result, the individual is obligated to apply judgment to a given set of circumstances.
- Judgment and therefore choice, is at the center of ethical conduct. Every Marine, regardless of grade, has this responsibility.

How do we make decisions in a simple or simplified moral field?

Every day we make ethical decisions in response to inputs society gives us.

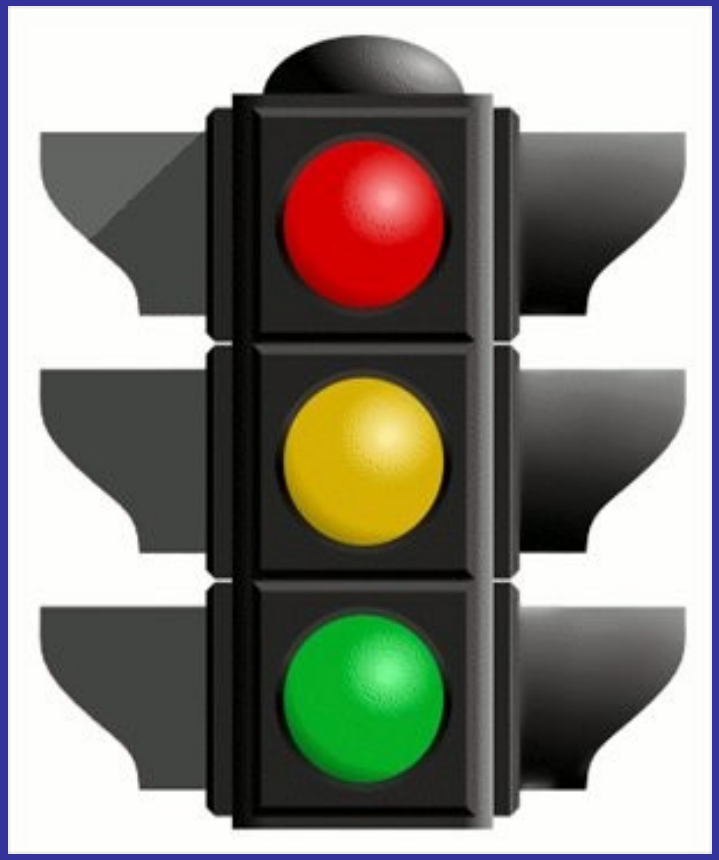
Often we do not even have to think about the ethical dimension of our actions.

How long does it take us to decide to stop at a red traffic light?

How long does it take us to help a child who is the victim of a car accident?

How long does it take us to give back the cashier the money he/she has given us in excess?

- **Our society is a strong provider of inputs and points of reference for morally sound behavior.**



- **When I make a moral decision what should I be aware of:**

Who I am;

Where I am;

Whom I am with;

What my responsibilities are.

How long would it take you to help a young woman being brutally attacked?

The Murder of Kitty Genovese in New York.

1935 - 1964

Good Samaritans at Princeton Theological Seminary

Darley and Batson 1973

What would you do?

Would you steal, cheat or lie?

- **Is it acceptable to steal?**
- **Is it acceptable to steal food?**
- **Is it acceptable to steal food if you are hungry?**
- **Is it acceptable to steal food if you are starving?**
- **Is it acceptable to steal food if someone you are caring for is starving (your children; your parents)?**

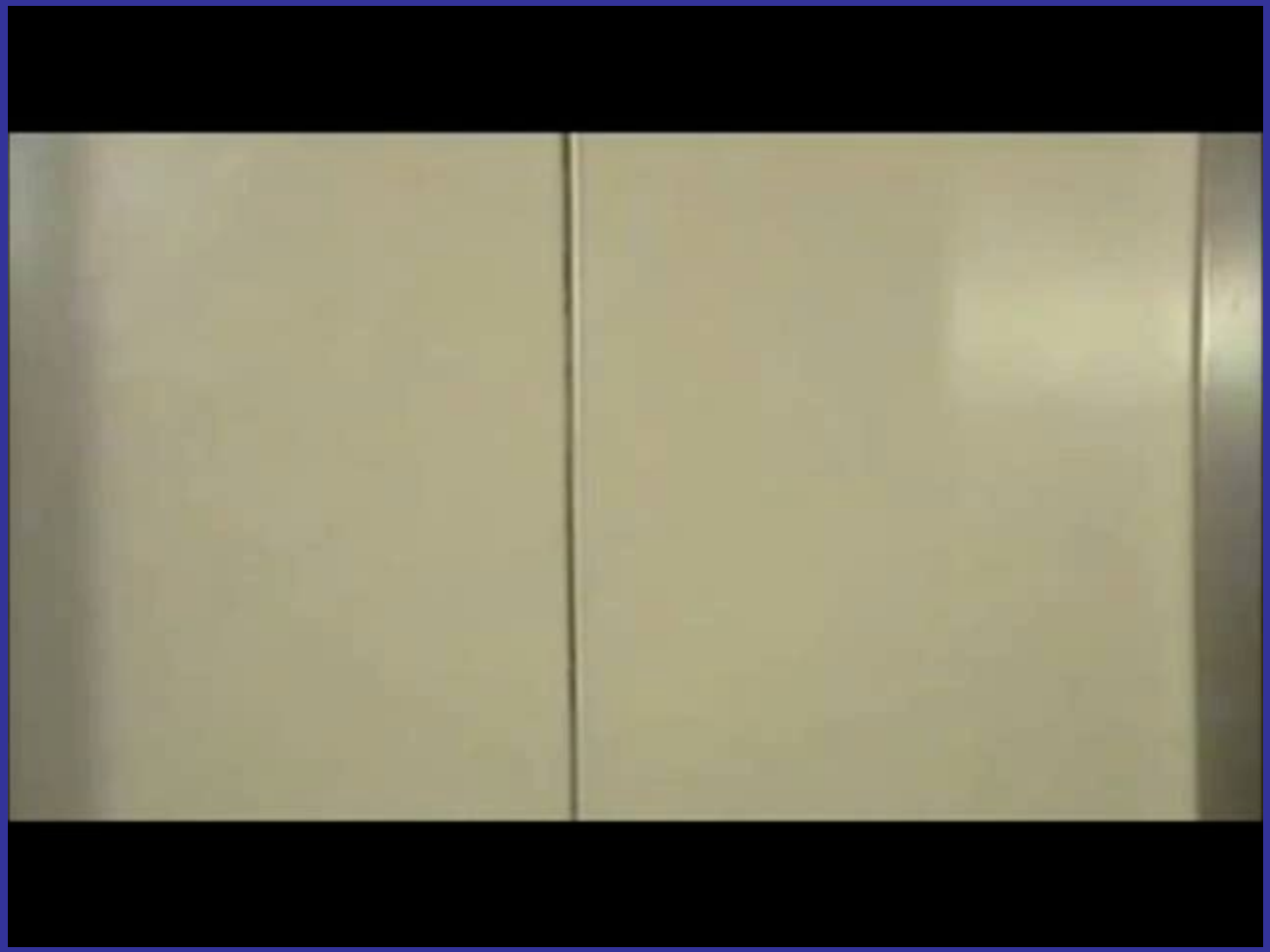
- **Is it acceptable to torture?**
- **Is it acceptable to torture an EPW/detainee who might be responsible for the killing of several Marines?**
- **Is it acceptable to torture the insurgent who might give us good intelligence?**
- **Is it acceptable to torture the insurgent who might know where they held a Marine that was taken prisoner yesterday?**
- **Is it acceptable to torture the member of a kidnapping group who has kidnapped your son, and might know where your son is being held?**

At what point does something unethical become acceptable? And why?

Emotions can cause us to abandon rational thought and shift our moral judgment from long-term absolutes to short-term pragmatic "solutions".

Marines do not do that!

How dangerous is this shift from rational thought to emotional "solutions" for the ethical leader and his/her Marines?



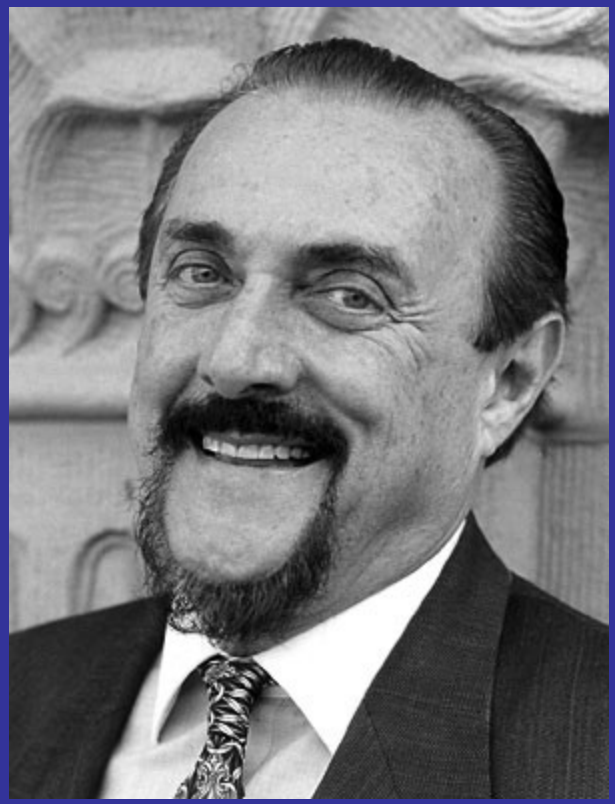
Ethical decision making… the impact of where we are!

- Were the university students who participated in the SPE a group of wild individuals?
- How long did it take for their moral compass to be compromised by the situation they were placed in?
- What should Marines and Sailors learn from the Stanford Prison Experiment?

From the SPE to… Abu Ghraib

- **“Good people can be induced, seduced, and initiated into behaving in evil ways.”**

- **“They can also be led to act in irrational, stupid, self-destructive, antisocial and mindless ways when they are immersed in *‘total situations’* that impact human nature.”**



Prof. Zimbardo

http://www.usna.edu/ethics/publications.htm#Zi

Ethical decision making… the impact of who we are with!

How do we make decision when you are in a group?

Conformity Can Be A Negative Side Of Cohesion.

Cohesion vs Conformity

- Cohesion can turn negative if the core values of the individuals and the unit are significantly eroded.
- In a crisis or highly stressful situation such as combat, soldiers will choose loyalty to their close friends over obligation to a higher organization.

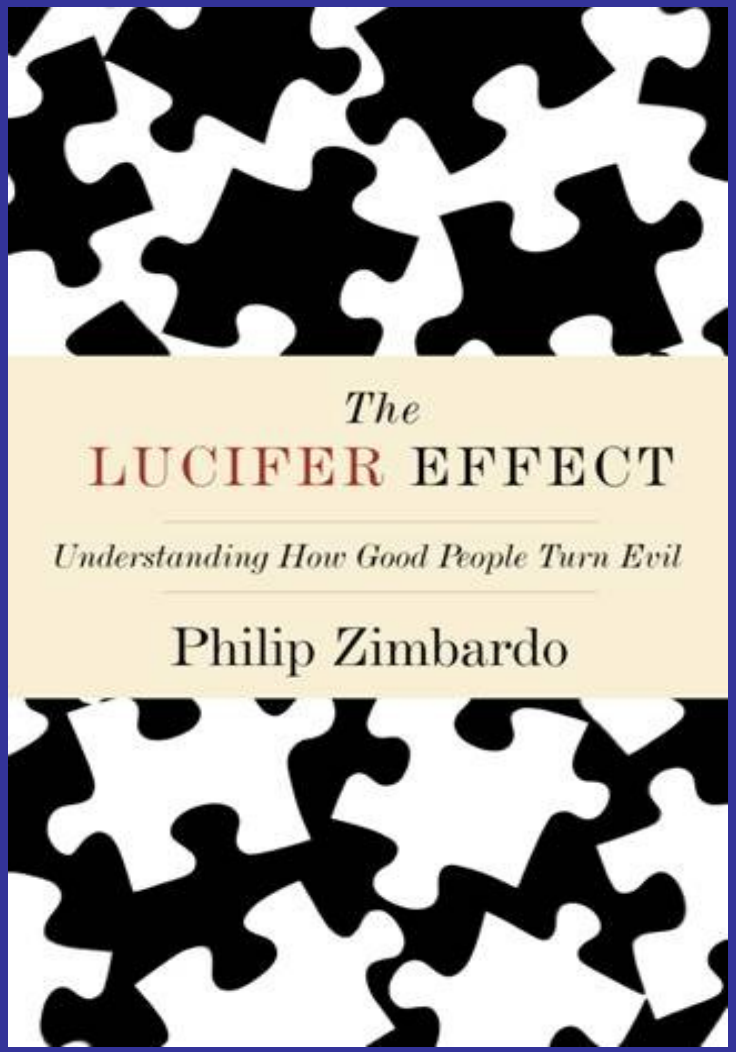
- **Obedience and Moral Courage. Should Marines behave like the subjects of Professor Milgram experiment?**

- **Milgram: a large number of individuals were able to execute an immoral order because they could convince themselves that they were not responsible for it.**
- **A Marine and Sailor is always responsible for his action.**

Prof. Milgram

An individuals' easiest "mistake"

"creating the myth of invulnerability to situational forces, we set ourselves up for a fall by not being sufficiently vigilant to situational forces."



Marines must have an "ethical muscle memory" to make instinctive decisions when rounds are impacting nearby, it's 120 degrees, and your buddy is bleeding.

An ethical mindset frames the problem – then it takes the moral and physical courage of a Marine to do the right thing.

Gen. Conway

- Situation: Iraq, 2009: Al Anbar Provence (Post Transition to ISF). You are the Leader of all Police Transition Teams (PTTs) in Al Anbar. While returning to their FOB one of your teams is hit by a complex ambush in Fallujah, Corpsman is severely injured. During the ambush IP's stand by idly while your team receives SAF. The team makes it back to the FOB without further incident.
- Mission: Train and mentor Iraqi Police
- WHAT DO YOU DO?

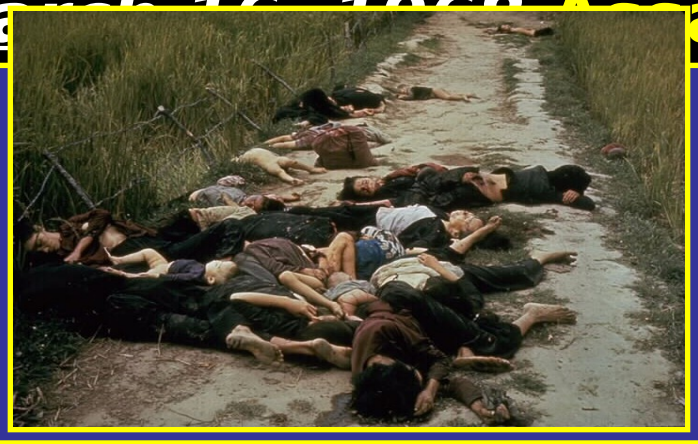
What Happened at My Lai

December 1967 **Charlie Company deploys.**

December 1967 – March 1968 **Operations against VC 48th Local Force Bn**

March 14, 1968 **SGT George Cox killed by booby trap**

March 16, 1968 **Assault on Son My Village**



- **More than 400 civilians were killed**
- **Crimes included group acts of murder, rape, sodomy, maiming and assault**

C Company: A Company of Ordinary Americans

- Average age: between 18 and 22.
- 87 % of the NCOs were high school graduates (20 % above the Army norm)
- 70 % of the non-NCOs were high school graduates; nineteen had some college credits
- Average cross section of American youth typically assigned to Army combat units in Vietnam.

WELCOME
TO